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Chairman: Ms. Ahmed (Vice-Chairman) ..... (Sudan)

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In the absence of Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein), Ms. Ahmed (Sudan), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 100: Crime prevention and criminal justice (*continued*) (A/57/3, A/57/64, A/57/135, A/57/152 and Add.1, A/57/153, A/57/154, A/57/158 and Add.1; A/C.3/57/L.2, A/C.3/57/L.3, A/C.3/57/L.4 and A/C.3/57/L.5)

Agenda item 101: International drug control (*continued*) (A/57/3, A/57/88, A/57/127, A/57/203)

1. **Mr. Cappagli** (Argentina) thanked the Executive Director of the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention for his introductory statement on the Office's work and associated himself with the statement made by the representative of Costa Rica on behalf of the Rio Group.

2. There seemed to be a real consensus that organized crime was taking advantage of globalization to develop increasingly lucrative transnational criminal activities which transcended borders and, in many cases were beyond the control of States. There was also therefore a wide consensus within the international community concerning the need to cooperate in preventing and combating transnational organized crime.

3. Important progress had been made in the context of the international legal framework such as the adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the three Protocols thereto relating to the smuggling of migrants, trafficking in persons, especially women and children, and the illicit manufacturing of and trafficking in firearms. His delegation had participated in the negotiations for those instruments since their inception and had made good progress towards ratification and urged more States to become parties to them.

4. The international community had begun negotiations for an international convention against corruption, and his Government was proud to have hosted the preparatory meeting of the Ad Hoc Committee established to draft such a convention and was participating actively in the negotiations under way in Vienna. Corruption was an evil which drained resources that States should be devoting to development and social protection, discredited the political class and threatened democratic stability. That problem must, however, be approached from all angles, by punishing the corrupter, the corrupt and anyone who profited from the use of illicit money.

5. It was crucial for developing countries that the convention should provide for mechanisms for the restitution of funds obtained as a result of corruption and condemn public officials who abused their position for personal gain. His delegation would continue to participate in the negotiations under way and thanked the Government of Mexico for its offer to host a high-level conference in 2003 to open the convention for signature.

6. The United Nations had an important role to play in providing technical assistance to States for the fight against crime, especially new types of transnational organized crime, and for criminal justice system reform. He, therefore, supported strengthening the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme and expressed satisfaction with the efforts by the Programme to meet the needs of the developing countries. He also commended the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen the Terrorism Prevention Branch of the Secretariat.

7. Five of the innocent victims who had lost their lives in the terrorist attack of 11 September had been Argentine citizens. His Government had been committed to the fight against terrorism from the beginning. One of the lessons learned from that attack was that terrorism supported itself through many other crimes and took advantage of the transportation and communication networks created to promote trade, well-being and communication between peoples. It was therefore increasingly urgent that the international community should cooperate to prevent criminal activities and develop new mechanisms to combat transnational organized crime.

8. **Mr. Lafiaji** (Nigeria) said that organized crime not only threatened the peace and security of Member States but also continued to inflict incalculable damage on collective efforts to promote sustainable development. The profits from transnational crimes such as the drug trade and trafficking in women and children, laundered through the global financial system, were often used to fund terrorist activities and purchase firearms and ammunition, which in turn fuelled conflicts, in particular in Africa. The combatants in those conflicts abused drugs, which went

hand in hand with prostitution, a contributing factor to the spread of HIV/AIDS. Transnational crime was further facilitated by the blatant use of sophisticated information technology, via the Internet, in the planning and execution of drug-related crimes.

9. Adoption of the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime and the three Protocols thereto and relevant United Nations resolutions confirmed the international community's recognition of the enormity of those problems and its determination to face them squarely. The terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 justified the implementation of measures to prevent corrupt practices and the transfer of illicit funds, including ongoing efforts to draw up a United Nations convention against corruption. It was encouraging to note that the concerted efforts of the international community were beginning to bear fruit.

10. Some Member States had established legal frameworks aimed at blocking economic loopholes which abetted corruption in both the public and private sectors. The principles of good governance, democracy, transparency and the rule of law were also being widely embraced. The recent establishment of the International Criminal Court (ICC) confirmed the universal consensus that crime must be punished no matter who the offender was. The United Nations African Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders (UNAFRI) had made significant contributions to supporting African States' efforts to deal effectively with criminal activity at the national, regional and international levels.

11. His Government's commitment to support such international efforts was exemplified by the work of the Nigerian National Drug Law Enforcement Agency (NDLEA), which in 2002 had seized a total of 201,274 kilograms of illicit drugs and arrested 620 traffickers, 443 of whom had been successfully prosecuted. Over 236 hectares of cannabis plantations had also been destroyed. Furthermore, in collaboration with United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), his Government had launched in 2001 the West African Joint Operations initiative with a view to preventing drug traffickers from finding safe haven in and operating from neighbouring countries of the subregion where policing of the drug trade and related crimes was poor. Owing to close collaboration between Nigeria and the United Nations Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention, the NDLEA Academy had been upgraded to a comprehensive multidisciplinary regional training centre for Africa.

12. In the area of combating drug trafficking, money-laundering and financial and economic crime, the domestic anti-money-laundering law was being updated, and the National Assembly was currently considering a bill on financial and economic crimes. In order to combat advance-fee fraud, the Central Bank of Nigeria had made it mandatory for banks which allowed their facilities to be used for financial scams to indemnify victims for all losses suffered. At the request of NDLEA, the Central Bank had sanctioned 22 banks for various infractions, and NDLEA had commenced prosecution of a number of banks for contravening Nigeria's money-laundering law.

13. He particularly commended efforts to prevent corrupt practices and the transfer of illicit funds. Depositing stolen public funds in banks in the rich countries constituted a severe assault on the prosperity of millions of people in the developing countries affected. That practice must be declared an economic crime against humanity. It was totally unacceptable that African and other developing countries allocated more than 40 per cent of their revenues annually to servicing their external debt, while huge amounts of stolen funds were stashed away in foreign bank accounts. It was imperative that the international community should cooperate in repatriating such funds to their countries of origin.

14. Efforts by developing countries to tackle the illicit drug trade and other transnational crimes were greatly hampered by financial and institutional inadequacies and manpower shortages. Technical assistance should be made readily available to countries which needed it in areas such as information and communication technology in order to counter the growing sophistication of drug traffickers. Member States must act in a concerted and strategic fashion to deal with the problems of chronic poverty, disease and ignorance. The issue of the developing countries' debt burden must be resolved through debt reduction or cancellation. New mechanisms must be found and implemented to rid the world of all the criminal activities which increasingly held it hostage, with tragic consequences for current and future generations.

15. **Mr. Ahmad** (Iraq) said that drugs were a serious international problem for society in general and for youth in particular; addressing that problem would

require cooperation at all levels. Iraq had always played an active role in drug control efforts and related regional, national and international forums. His Government had always been aware of the effects of the problem, had acceded to all relevant international conventions and had created a national committee for drug control in order to prevent Iraq from becoming a transit country by virtue of its location between drug producing and consuming regions.

16. His Government was also striving to fight against drug use, except for medicinal purposes. Illegal crops had been eliminated in accordance with relevant legislation, and an awareness campaign on the effects of drug abuse had been launched. Unfortunately, in the north of the country the foreign military intervention had led to a lack of centralized authority and had encouraged some groups to grow coca; his Government had reported that fact year after year. In 2000, 569,970 kilograms of hashish, 10,511 kilograms of opium and 1,070 kilograms of heroin had been confiscated countrywide; those drugs had been intended for shipment to and sale in neighbouring countries. The unjust blockade, the embargo and the military attacks to which Iraq was subject had prevented importation of the equipment necessary for drug control.

17. **Mr. Gzlal** (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) commended United Nations drug-control efforts, as well as the technical and legal assistance provided to developing countries for the fight against the production, consumption and marketing of drugs.

18. Narcotic drugs deprived human beings of their dignity and honour, affected the memory and caused mental problems and even death, in addition to contributing to pandemics such as HIV/AIDS. The use of narcotic drugs was also a serious threat, which was universal in scope and spreading rapidly in all countries and among all kinds of people, crossing boundaries and affecting all ages and social strata. The international community must therefore be vigilant and intensify its efforts at the regional, national and international levels.

19. He took note of the report of the Secretary-General on implementation of the outcome of the twentieth special session of the General Assembly devoted to countering the world drug problem together (A/57/127) and welcomed progress made, although the results had not met the expectations of the international community. The report, nevertheless, represented an important step forward in the fight against the production of narcotic drugs and would be an instrument for increasing awareness in the international community of the dangers posed by those substances as well as for identifying those who broke the law. The report also dealt with the problem of the reintegration and treatment of addicts.

20. He expressed concern at the use of new technologies and the Internet for the illegal trade in narcotics as indicated in the 2001 report of the Commission on Narcotic Drugs (E/2001/28-E/CN.7/2001/12). Abuse of technology could prejudice the efforts undertaken by the international community to control narcotics. The drug problem in the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya was a relatively recent one, but, while not a producer country, its geographical location made it a transit country. That situation had worsened a few years before with the abolition of laws which restricted transit and transport links with neighbouring countries.

21. His Government was convinced that drug abuse led to the destruction of innocent souls and had acceded to all the current international conventions relating to the fight against narcotics and had adopted various measures in that area, from severe penalties including even life imprisonment or death for those who traded in or used drugs to coordination of appropriate measures with neighbouring countries and the establishment of bodies to control narcotic drugs. In addition, 27 June every year had been designated as the day for the fight against narcotics and, once a year, a week of activities was organized to provide information on the devastating effects of drug use. Those measures remained however inadequate given the magnitude of the problem.

The meeting rose at 3.45 p.m.